

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**ODH Home Health Visits to Include Info for New Fathers**

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Thanks to a new collaboration between the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), expectant and new parents in ODH’s Home Visiting programs will now also receive information about local fatherhood programs.

“This partnership makes perfect sense,” said Kim Dent, executive director of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood. “Home visiting programs empower parents with skills, tools and confidence to nurture the healthy growth of their children, and fatherhood programs do the same thing for dads. We can’t wait to see the results of these efforts.”

Research shows that when fathers are involved in their children’s lives and provide them with good care – for example, by encouraging breastfeeding, not smoking and practicing safe sleep habits with their babies – infant mortality rates decline.

“Fathers have a profound and far-reaching impact on a child’s development,” said Jye Breckenridge, administrator for early childhood home visiting programs at the Ohio Department of Health.

“Through this collaborative partnership, I believe that our system is taking another step towards achieving our vision: optimal health and developmental outcomes for Ohio’s children and families.”

The Ohio Commission on Fatherhood seeks to improve the well-being of Ohio’s children by helping fathers become better parents, partners and providers. Commissioners include the directors of state agencies, bipartisan members of the Ohio House and Senate, and citizens chosen by the governor because of their knowledge of fatherhood issues. As part of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the commission strengthens vulnerable families by funding programs that serve low-income fathers.

ODH Home Visiting programs are voluntary, evidence-based family support programs designed to promote healthy growth and development for babies and young children. Well-trained professionals visit parents in their homes to discuss issues related to pregnancy, children’s health and development, and parenting. Now, if fathers are interested in learning more about local fatherhood programs, the home visitor can make a referral.

For more information about the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood and the programs it funds, visit [fatherhood.ohio.gov](http://fatherhood.ohio.gov). For more information about ODH Home Visiting programs, visit [HelpMeGrow.ohio.gov](http://HelpMeGrow.ohio.gov).